

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A vent filter seal for a sterilization container having planar ~~interior surfaces and exterior surfaces~~ members that enclose an interior space wherein one of the container planar members is a vent planar member that is a generally flat member that has an interior surface and an exterior surface and a container vent ~~in one of the container planar surfaces~~ through which sterilization media can pass through the vent planar member ~~is introduced~~ into the interior space of the container ~~from outside the container~~ and a sheet filter inside the container covering the container vent comprising:

a vent recess ~~in~~ within the an interior container vent planar surface member surrounding the container vent wherein said vent recess ~~and~~ is concave relative to the vent planar member interior surface and said sheet filter is disposed over the interior surface and extends over said vent recess and the container vent;

a gasket secured wholly within said vent recess where it is protected against damage ~~and wherein the sheet filter extends over the vent and vent recess;~~ and

a generally planar filter cover having a planar surface and a cover vent with a ~~seal~~ cover ridge in said planar surface surrounding the cover vent wherein said ~~seal~~ cover ridge is coextensive with said vent recess and sized to at least partially fit into said vent recess whereby when said filter cover is operatively secured in place, said ~~seal~~ cover ridge is forced against said ~~gasket~~

~~and the sheet filter which, in turn, is forced against said gasket therebetween~~
thereby forming a seal surrounding both the vent and said cover vent.

2. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 1 further comprising:

a protective vent ridge ~~on~~ extending above the exterior ~~planar~~ surface and
surrounding the container vent.

3. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 2 wherein said protective
vent ridge is the opposite side of said vent recess.

4. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 1 further comprising:

a locking mechanism securing said filter cover onto the container vent
planar member and urging said ~~seal~~ cover ridge into said vent recess with a
positive force.

5. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 4 wherein said cover vent
~~said filter cover~~ and the ~~container planar surface containing~~ container vent are
spaced apart ~~at the location of the vent~~ a distance greater than the thickness
of the filter when said filter cover is ~~locked onto the container~~ operatively
secured in place whereby lateral movement of sterilization media between the
container vent and said cover vent is facilitated.

6. (Currently Amended) The vent filter seal of claim 5 wherein the container
vent is a pattern of holes through the container planar member and ~~the filter~~
~~cover~~ further ~~comprises~~ wherein said cover vent is a pattern of holes through
said filter cover within the area defined by said ~~seal~~ cover ridge wherein the
holes of the container vent and said holes of said filter cover are offset relative
to each other when said filter cover is secured in place.

7-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) The vent filter seal of claim 1 wherein said gasket has a generally concave cross-section.

14. (Canceled)

15. (New) The vent filter seal of claim 1 wherein the vent planar member is in a removable container lid and said gasket is exposed when said filter cover is removed to change the filter.